



For Release: Wednesday, April 20, 2016

16-734-CHI

MIDWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Chicago, Ill.

Technical information: (312) 353-1880 BLSInfoChicago@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/midwest

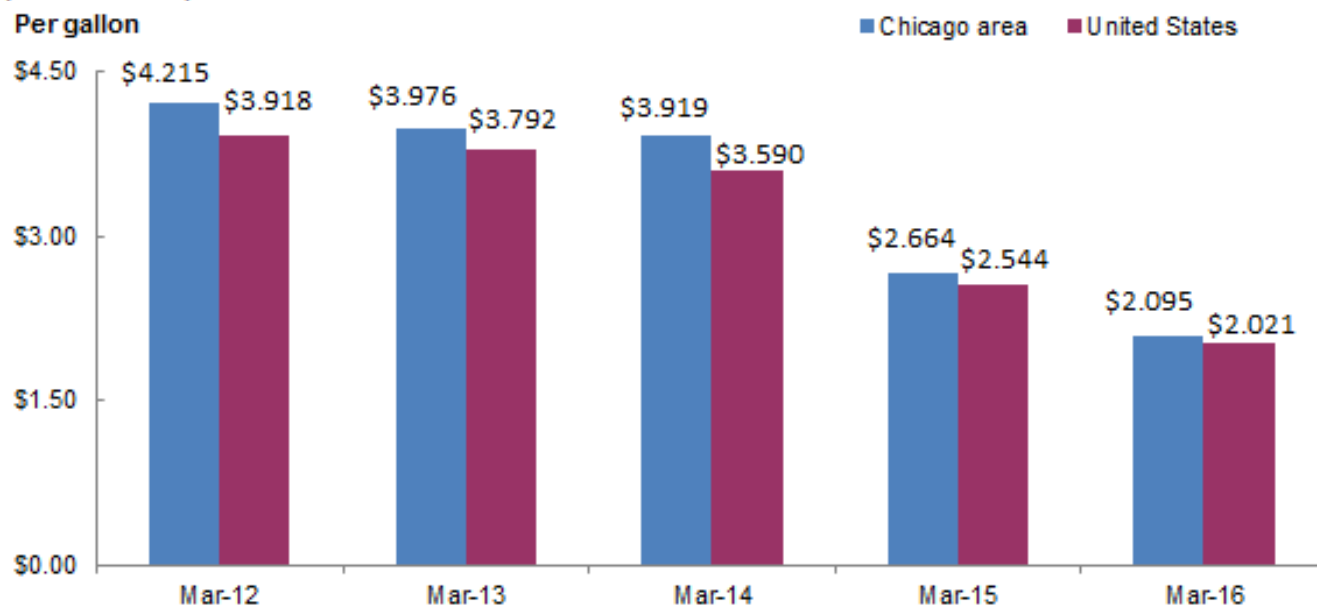
Media contact: (312) 353-1138

Average Energy Prices, Chicago-Gary-Kenosha — March 2016

Gasoline prices averaged \$2.095 a gallon in the Chicago-Gary-Kenosha area in March 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that area gasoline prices were down 56.9 cents compared to March 2015 when they averaged \$2.664 per gallon. Chicago area households paid an average of 15.4 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) of electricity in March 2016, 10.5 percent less than the 17.2 cents per kWh paid in March 2015. In March, the average cost of utility (piped) gas was 72.5 cents per therm, down from its average price of 81.1 cents per therm a year earlier. (Data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year-analysis is used throughout.)

At \$2.095 a gallon, prices for gasoline in the Chicago area were comparable to the national average of \$2.021 a gallon in March 2016. However, in the previous four years (2012-2015) in March, Chicago area gasoline prices exceeded the national average, ranging from 4.7 percent to 9.2 percent more. (See [chart 1.](#))

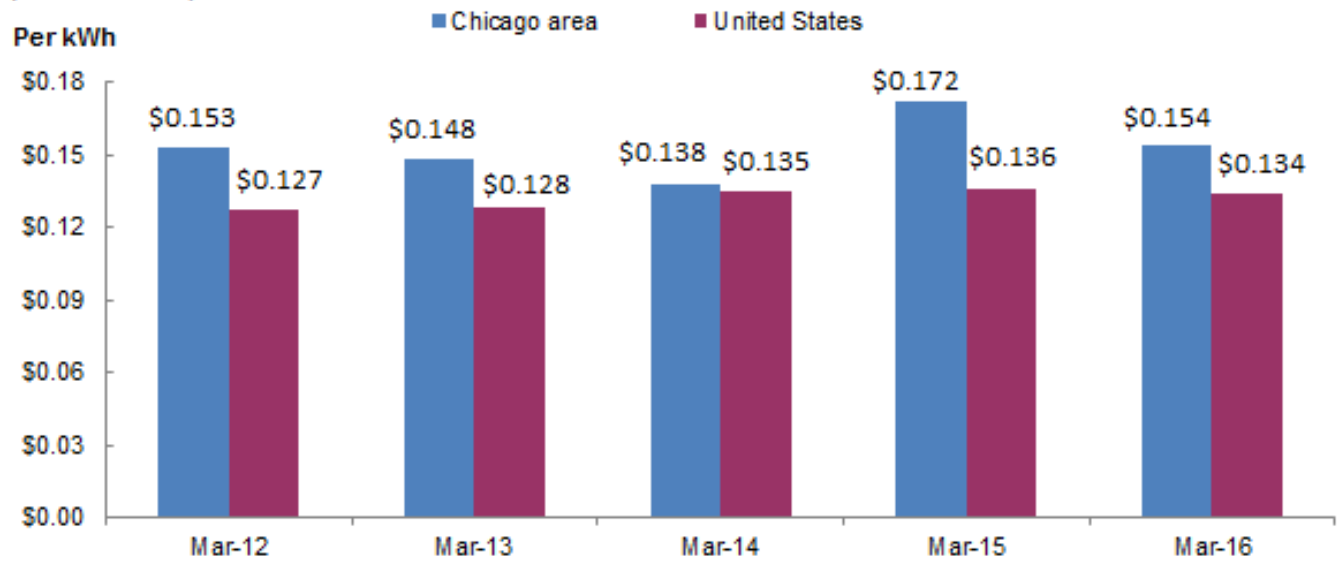
Chart 1. Average prices for gasoline, Chicago-Gary-Kenosha and the United States, 2012-2016 (as of March)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The 15.4 cents per kWh that Chicago households paid for electricity in March 2016 was 14.9 percent higher than the nationwide average cost of 13.4 cents per kWh. With the exception of March 2014, when Chicago area electricity costs were comparable to the national average, prices have exceeded the national average by 15.6 percent or more in the previous four years (2012-2015) in March. (See [chart 2.](#))

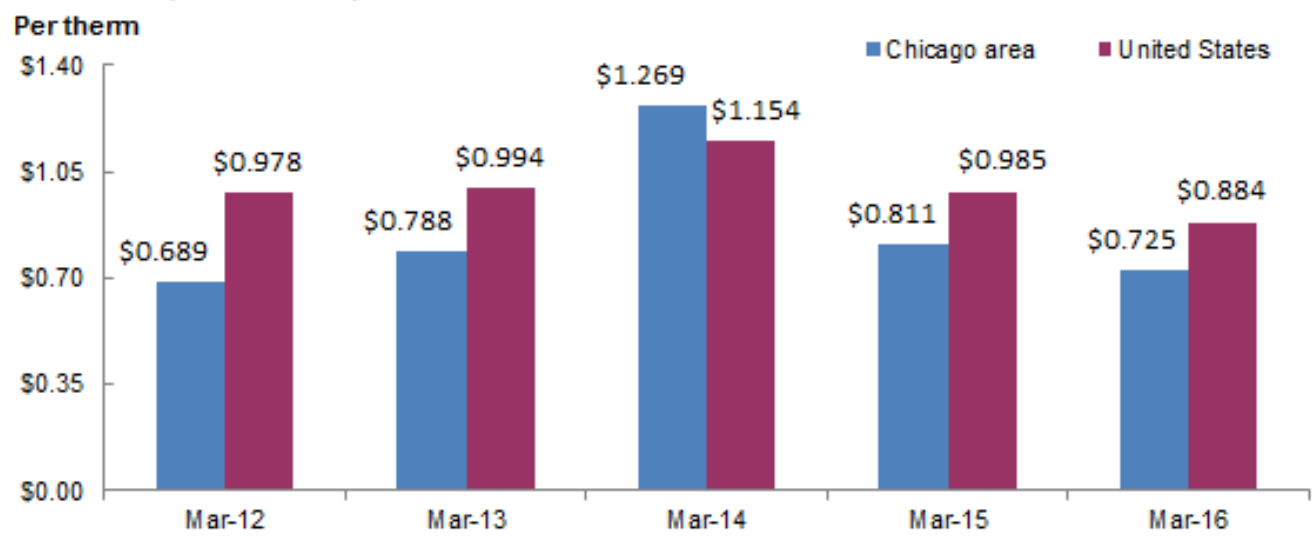
Chart 2. Average prices for electricity, Chicago-Gary-Kenosha and the United States, 2012-2016 (as of March)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Prices paid by Chicago area consumers for utility (piped) gas, commonly referred to as natural gas, were 72.5 cents per therm in March 2016, 18.0 percent below the national average of 88.4 cents per therm. With the exception of March 2014, when Chicago area utility (piped) gas costs were 10.0 percent higher the national average, prices in the previous four years (2012-2015) were lower than the national average, ranging from 17.7 percent to 29.6 percent less. (See [chart 3.](#))

Chart 3. Average prices for utility (piped) gas, Chicago-Gary-Kenosha and the United States, 2012-2016 (as of March)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The **Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, Ill.-Ind.-Wis., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area** consists of Cook, De Kalb, Du Page, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties in Illinois; Lake and Porter Counties in Indiana; and Kenosha County in Wisconsin.

Historical average energy prices for the U.S. and select metropolitan areas are available at www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/data/averageenergyprices_selectedareas_table.htm.

The Consumer Price Index for April 2016 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, May 17, 2016.

Technical Note

Average prices are estimated from Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for selected commodity series to support the research and analytic needs of CPI data users. Average prices for electricity, utility (piped) gas, and gasoline are published monthly for the U.S. city average, the 4 regions, the 3 population size classes, 10 region/size-class cross-classifications, and the 14 largest local index areas. For electricity, average prices per kilowatt-hour (kWh) are published. For utility (piped) gas, average prices per therm are published. For gasoline, the average price per gallon is published. Average prices for commonly available grades of gasoline are published as well as the average price across all grades.

All eligible prices are converted to a price per normalized quantity. These prices are then used to estimate a price for a defined fixed quantity. The average price per kilowatt-hour represents the total bill divided by the kilowatt-hour usage. The total bill is the sum of all items applicable to all consumers appearing on an electricity bill including, but not limited to, variable rates per kWh, fixed costs, taxes, surcharges, and credits. This calculation also applies to the average price per therm for utility (piped) gas.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Average prices for gasoline, electricity, and utility (piped) gas, Chicago-Gary-Kenosha and the United States, March 2015 – March 2016, not seasonally adjusted

| Year and month | Gasoline per gallon | | Electricity per kWh | | Utility (piped) gas per therm | |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| | Chicago area | United States | Chicago area | United States | Chicago area | United States |
| 2015 | | | | | | |
| March | \$2.664 | \$2.544 | \$0.172 | \$0.136 | \$0.811 | \$0.985 |
| April | 2.737 | 2.545 | 0.175 | 0.137 | 0.766 | 0.947 |
| May..... | 2.942 | 2.832 | 0.176 | 0.137 | 0.756 | 0.930 |
| June..... | 3.189 | 2.889 | 0.161 | 0.143 | 0.774 | 0.942 |
| July | 3.029 | 2.893 | 0.160 | 0.142 | 0.783 | 0.933 |
| August | 3.115 | 2.745 | 0.161 | 0.142 | 0.793 | 0.932 |
| September..... | 2.737 | 2.463 | 0.157 | 0.141 | 0.786 | 0.921 |
| October..... | 2.658 | 2.357 | 0.158 | 0.136 | 0.760 | 0.909 |
| November..... | 2.332 | 2.249 | 0.158 | 0.134 | 0.733 | 0.903 |
| December..... | 2.129 | 2.125 | 0.156 | 0.133 | 0.702 | 0.892 |
| 2016 | | | | | | |
| January..... | 1.992 | 2.034 | 0.153 | 0.134 | 0.717 | 0.898 |
| February | 1.710 | 1.833 | 0.153 | 0.134 | 0.733 | 0.895 |
| March | 2.095 | 2.021 | 0.154 | 0.134 | 0.725 | 0.884 |